



TESTIMONY AGAINST REDUCING STATE NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

March 11, 2010

Good afternoon Members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Nancy Carrington. I am CEO of Connecticut Food Bank, the largest centralized source of donated emergency food in Connecticut.

I am here to testify about the Governor's Deficit Mitigation Plan as it pertains to the State Nutrition Assistance Program. I respectfully request level funding for the State Nutrition Assistance Program, a critical source of high-protein and nutritious food for the food-assistance network in Connecticut. An added benefit to the program is the food is always purchased from Connecticut companies, supporting our state's business and agricultural communities.

As we all continue to grapple with the disastrous impacts of the recession, many of us are facing or have had to make difficult choices in our lives, in our businesses and in our government. I can only imagine the choices you will have to make as you tackle the budget deficit.

But as you make those choices, please keep in mind the daily and difficult decisions that a single mother has had to make this past year as she struggled with getting laid off, keeping her home and making sure her four children are fed as she tackles her own household budget deficit.

Sue, a middle class homeowner living along Connecticut's shoreline, lost her purchasing job last year when her company downsized. She has been unable to find a job since then. Sue is cutting back on the meals for her children because she simply doesn't have enough money for food. So every day the difficult choice she makes is: **Should I give my children breakfast in the morning and let them go to bed hungry? Or should I let them start their day hungry so I can feed them dinner at night?**

Sue isn't alone. In Connecticut, about 1 out of 7 households has difficulty putting food on their tables, according to a Gallup survey conducted for the national Food Research and Action Center.

Last year, we distributed 18.7 million pounds of food through our network—the most we have ever handled. The federal stimulus bill provided an additional 14 truckloads of food. That food is gone, but the need isn't.

Men, women and children are still hungry in 2010 and I am speaking on their behalf when I respectfully ask that you support level funding of the State Nutrition Assistance Program.

As it is, the current funding level of the State Nutrition Assistance Program isn't enough to meet the 30 percent increase in demand that we have seen throughout the state.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope you will support the fight against hunger.

Connecticut Food Bank

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